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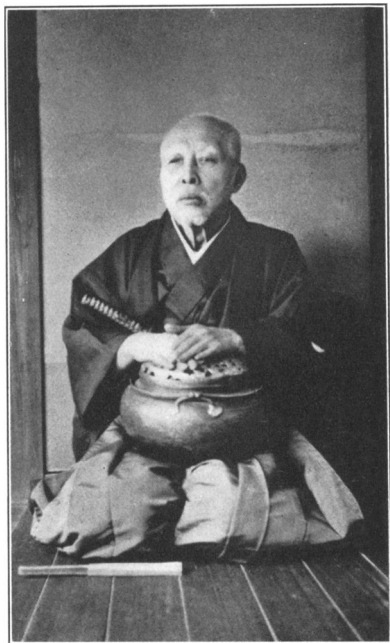
MASAOUJI GODA AND HIS COLLECTION OF ARMS

THE veteran collector, Masaouji Goda, an authority on the ancient military arts of Japan and a friend of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, died recently in Kyoto. He was born in the castle of Osaka in 1844, where his samurai forebears had been experts and purchasers of the arms of their feudal princes since the end of the sixteenth century, and where he himself remained in feudal service till the downfall of the shogunate and the burning of the Osaka fortress—which, by the way, was probably the strongest in Japan. Some years ago, Mr. Goda became interested in the work of our Department of Arms and Armor, and a letter from him was published in this BULLETIN¹ at the time he presented three of his famous Kaneiyé sword guards to the Museum. There is reason to believe, in fact, that he had in mind ultimately to present us much of his collection of sword furniture and armor. He certainly wished no one else to have it, although he was tempted repeatedly to dispose of it.

I met Mr. Goda in his home in the Fuya nijo, Sangaru, in Kyoto, in 1905, under circumstances which were trying for both of us; for when I made my first bow to him, forehead to ground, in the old Japanese fashion, drawing in my breath audibly and doing my best to murmur the polite phrases of the visitor, I came as a competitor for an object which he was anxious to purchase himself. This was an early corselet (now in Case O.5, Room H 6) which a dealer in antiquities had pawned to him—pawning in Japan is often the first step toward a purchase. But at the moment of my visit, Mr. Goda was not in a position to pay the price asked and so the armor was duly redeemed and he saw it packed and carried away with the good humor of a sportsman. He even poured "coals of fire" on my interfering head; for, instead of holding this purchase against the Museum which I was representing, he wished to learn of its work, and in the end

became so much interested in it that he sent us as a gift, through the American ambassador, three of the most precious objects in his collection!

My next visit was paid to Mr. Goda in May of this year, twelve years later. He was then in ill health, recovering slowly from a stroke of paralysis, and I found that family affairs had made it desirable for him to dispose of his collection. So my visit



MASAOUJI GODA, KYOTO, 1917

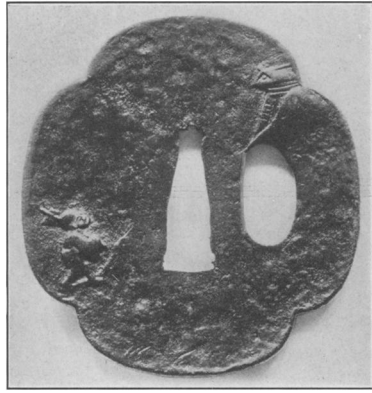
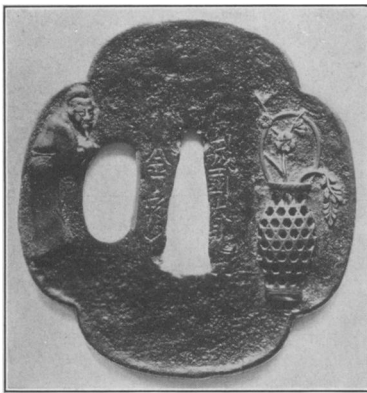
was, museumly speaking, opportune. He offered me the chance to secure for our collection his series of sword mounts, sword guards, the most important of his helmets, his earliest swords, and a number of objects in lacquer (the like of which I had never seen) which accompanied the war panoply of a daimyo; and this opportunity was embraced through the generous gift of a Trustee of the Museum who has asked that his name be withheld. To these objects, Mr. Goda added as a gift a splendid Miochin head-piece and two quivers of early period and extreme rarity.

Accordingly, thanks to the Goda Col-

¹Vol. II (1907), pp. 107-8.

lection, the Museum adds to its series many admirable objects representing the art of the Japanese armorer. Its sword furniture—and we had little in this field—gives us genuine examples of the workmanship of the great sword decorators of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and (mainly) eighteenth centuries, including notably the Goto. It may be emphasized that these objects were selected by an expert of taste and experience who for his own satisfaction and without a commercial leaning had chosen them among thousands of specimens during

In this regard, I note that in the collection of Mr. Goda we have two genuine specimens of guards by Kanei'yé. On one of them is pictured an elderly lover of tea ceremonies gazing rapturously at a flower arrangement—a guard, well known to the connoisseurs of Japan, which has been in the possession of Mr. Goda for about half a century. The second Kanei'yé guard accompanies a small sword (*wakizashi*) of beautiful quality whose various metal furnishings are all by the hand of the Kanei'yé! This is the sword which Mr. Goda



SWORD GUARD BY KANEI'YÉ I

a long period—at least half a century. Some of the objects, indeed, belonged to the family of Mr. Goda and were the fruit of his forebears' judicious selection. This provenance may not seem important to an occidental collector who promptly classifies and esteems his Japanese gatherings according to the eminent signatures they bear; but to the discriminating Japanese this matter *is* extremely important, for it is apt to spell the difference between the real and the false. In fact, I think it may truly be said that of sword ornaments which are collected at random and bear the names of early Goto, perhaps not more than one in ten has any reasonable likelihood of being genuine; nor among one hundred old sword guards signed "Kaneiyé" has the collector more than a bare chance of finding a single example of the workmanship of this great family of artists.

loved best of all and which he thrust in his obi when I took the picture here shown.

Another sword guard from the Goda Collection is a genuine Nobouiyé I (1550) and with it is a helmet "bowl," or *hachi*, by the same famous artist. Regarding this object, too, one may note that while "Nobouiyé" helmets are relatively common in Japan (at different times I have bought three of them), genuine specimens from the hand of the first master are supremely rare; besides the Goda *hachi* I know of but two others in Japan. These, by the way, stand gloriously apart from the copies or counterfeits when one contrasts them. In the genuine examples, the bands of metal which make up the bowl of the helmet (*hachi*) are combined in subtle curves so gracefully that no copyist has as yet successfully reproduced them.

B. D.